

## 6 Exploring Sequoia National Park - Late Winter 2016

**PLEASE EXPLORE SAFELY!** Enjoy these parks and return safely to family and friends. Review the advice on page 10, and take charge of your safety. And always store food properly before leaving your car or camp.

### The Foothills

These lower elevations offer wonderful winter visits—green and usually snowless! There are more different plants and animals here than in the other park areas combined. Wildflowers often start blooming late in January. Ticks and poison oak should be avoided any time of year here (*see page 10 for safety tips*).

#### Foothills Visitor Center

Exhibits on the diverse foothills. Hours on page 2.

#### Hospital Rock Picnic Area

Exhibits about the Western Mono people who once lived here. A short trail built by the Civilian Conservation Corps leads to a cascade. Careful; drownings often occur here! Always store food in the metal boxes provided to keep it from bears.

**Marble Falls Trail** climbs 3.7 miles (6km) through chaparral to a waterfall. Park across the highway from Potwisha (no non-camper parking in campground). Near site #14, follow the dirt road across a concrete ditch; the trail starts along the steep bank to the right.

#### Paradise Creek

Park at Hospital Rock Picnic Area (no non-camper parking in campground). Walk 0.8 miles to Buck-eye Flat Campground. Take the path across from site #28 to cross a footbridge over the Middle Fork. Follow Paradise Creek (not the Middle Fork) for 1 mile until the trail grows faint.

### Giant Forest

Park across from Giant Forest Museum. Next-closest restroom is at the Sherman Tree. Once snow builds up, rent snowshoes and cross-country skis at Wuksachi Lodge. Free snowshoe walks may be offered on weekends/holidays (*see page 5*). The Giant Forest shuttle starts up on May 26.

#### Giant Forest Museum

Warm up and enjoy the exhibits! Page 2 has details. Walking and ski-trail maps are sold here.

#### Big Trees Trail

Walk this level 2/3-mile (1 km) paved trail that circles Round Meadow. Colorful trailside panels describe sequoia ecology. Try skiing or snowshoeing it once snow gets deep (no yellow markers)!

#### General Sherman Tree

Two miles north of Giant Forest Museum. In winter, access to the world's largest tree is usually only from the parking area along the Generals Highway. The short, paved, fairly level trail from there to the tree may be plowed or the snow packed down enough to walk on, but either way it is often slippery. Be careful!

The other 1/2-mile trail to the tree opens in spring (or earlier, if there is no snow). From the Generals Hwy, take Wolverton Road (between the Sherman Tree and Lodgepole) and follow signs.

#### Moro Rock/Crescent Meadow Road

This 3-mile (5 km), dead-end road closes in winter to become a ski and snowshoe trail. It begins at Giant Forest Museum and ends at Crescent Meadow. *Walkers & snowshoers: Please don't walk in ski tracks.* Highlights:

- **Moro Rock** - A granite dome with a 1/4-mile staircase to the top (300-foot elevation gain). Spectacular views. Do not climb when any ice or snow is on the stairs! Two miles from Generals Highway.
- **Tunnel Log** - A fallen sequoia that was tunneled through, and the only "tree you can drive through" in these parks.
- **Crescent Meadow** - Sequoias around a fragile wetland. Stay on designated trails or fallen logs to get into meadows. Several trails start here, including the 1-mile route to Tharp's Log, a cabin in a fallen sequoia; and the High Sierra Trail (60+ miles to Mt. Whitney, at 14,500', highest in the lower 48 states).

### Mineral King - closed until spring

Road opens late May to late October. The steep, winding road ends at 7800'. No gas or electricity. When closed, the road is gated at the park boundary (~9 miles from Hwy 198); ask at Foothills Visitor Center for a pass to through the gate. Check weather forecasts before going.



## Snowplay Areas, Winter

### Avoid Sledding Injuries!

People are seriously injured *every* year.

- Slide feet first, on slopes clear of trees, rocks, people, and other obstacles. After you slide, move out of the way of other sledders. Fast sledding and collisions cause most injuries; Page 10 has more safety tips.
- Play only in designated areas. Don't sled or ski into roads. Snowplay is prohibited in park residential areas and other areas as signed.
- In an emergency, dial 911 (*pages 8-9 give pay-phone locations*). Cell signals are usually poor.

## April 23 is Junior Ranger Day!

### Explore! Learn! Protect!

*Enjoy free park admission and activities for children and their families in several park areas. Learn how we can all protect these parks, and earn your Junior Ranger patch!*

*Can't be here then? Pick up your free Junior Ranger booklet at any visitor center and complete the activities.*

